

# THE ACTIVIST



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## **TRANSPORT WORKER – ISSUE 1**

The mag is done and off to the printers. This issue is full of robust stories with a strong emphasis on H&S issues within KiwiRail. We also have notes from 90% of the Union's branches which are essential for giving all areas of the membership a voice and platform to be heard from.

## **2<sup>ND</sup> ANNIVERSARY – CANTERBURY EARTHQUAKE**

Today marks the second anniversary of the February 22 earthquake and we all need to reflect upon the difficulties that our Canterbury members have been working and living in since that fateful day. Some of our members do not still have a working toilet in their home.

We must not forget that 115 people lost their lives in the CTV building alone and so we must, as a society, ensure that all future buildings are fit for purpose.

RMTU members in Canterbury – we in the rest of NZ salute you for your fortitude and "let's get on with it attitude".

## **HILLSIDE BRANCH VOTES TO AMALGAMATE WITH OTAGO RAIL BRANCH**

Earlier this week the remaining members at Hillside Railway Workshops, that is the so called "sunset crew" (who are decommissioning the plant) and the "new" heavy lift maintenance crew (who are working on locos) voted unanimously to wind up the Hillside Branch and to integrate with the Otago Rail Branch.

Otago Rail Branch Chair Brian McKay and Secretary Tim Spence were in attendance together with Organiser John Kerr. It was a poignant moment in the history of our

union in Dunedin, marking as it did the end (for now) of a Branch which has fought for workers at Hillside for generations.

That said, the Otago Rail Branch is very active and enjoys the support of the membership and has some extremely capable delegates and Officials. The Hillside workers will be well supported and we look forward to the day when the next Labour led Government honours its commitment to reinstate rail manufacturing at Hillside and the likely re-formation of a Hillside Branch!

A sad event and all preventable if we had a meaningful local content procurement policy like most other countries.

## **LYTTELTON PORT COMPANY**

The hearing for the City Depot case commences on Monday in the Employment Court in Christchurch.

Members will recall that the RMTU won a case in the Employment Relations Authority arguing that cargo handlers at LPC's inland depot fall under the coverage clause of the Combined Unions –LPC collective agreement. The Employer has appealed this and the hearing is next week.

The hearing is open to the public so any members wishing to sit in on proceedings are most welcome. The hearing is at Level 1, Aoraki House, 76 Peterborough Street commencing 0930hrs and will run from Monday to Wednesday the 27<sup>th</sup> February as required. **See you there!**

## **ASBESTOS HAZARD AT SOUTHDOWN**

A number of years ago during the Toll Rail era a dispute erupted on the Westfield, Southdown site over Toll's attempts to excavate a series of known asbestos burial sites. The area had previously been used as

*This is for the information and guidance of RMTU members only!*

a dumping group by James Hardie for asbestos waste. The Toll attempt was marked by no consultation, no plan and a complete disregard for the safety of their staff.

KiwiRail's decision to attempt to deal with this situation was not unexpected. Some of the asbestos has been in known piles which impede the efficient operation of the CT site. Kiwirail formulated a plan, gained expert engineering advice on how to safely deal with the hazard, then gained council approval to proceed. This plan included consultation with the RMTU and effected parties. All well and good.

At the consultation meeting with CT site members the company was advised by long serving members that the problem with the asbestos would be found to be larger than envisioned. The asbestos wasn't restricted to the known piles, but was widespread across the site. The company agreed to dig test holes and see if that was the case, and found further asbestos. Testing has concluded that the asbestos is not airborne, but anecdotal advise is that the buried asbestos which is mainly in sheet and pipe form is being crushed by the constant pressure of heavy machinery and may well migrate to the surface over time, if that were to occur there is the risk that at any place on the site which is not sealed or capped, the asbestos could become airborne and become a major hazard to the health of all workers in the area.

This will require constant vigilance by both the company and the RMTU.

## WHAT KILLED KEN CALLOW?

CTU has launched a YouTube clip and campaign aimed at trying to get the Government to agree to an inquiry into the forestry industry, and to implementing health and safety and employment standards that stop the deaths and injuries of forestry workers. Helen Kelly said "forestry is the most dangerous industry in New Zealand. In 2013 there have already been two deaths - since 2008, 23 workers

have died and almost 900 have been seriously injured. Each death is a family, community, workplace losing someone who was loved. Each injury is someone's life being changed forever by something that happened at work."

"We need to bring attention to this, the government and the industry to step up and stop this from happening." CTU last night launched a YouTube clip of Caroline and Roger Callow talking about the tragic death of their son, Ken Callow, at work, and are using the One Big Voice website to raise funds for a billboard campaign to draw attention to the dangers in the sector. For more information, see [www.whatkilledkencallow.org.nz](http://www.whatkilledkencallow.org.nz)

## NEW BLOG UNITES TOP LEFT-WING POLITICAL COMMENTATORS AND PROGRESSIVE OPINION SHAPERS

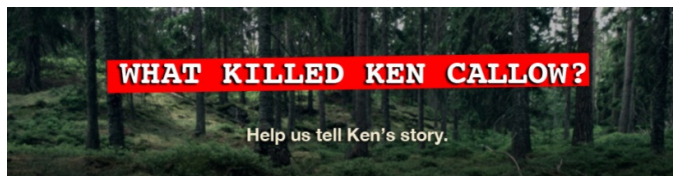
Launching Friday 1 March, 2013, the 'TheDailyBlog.co.nz' unites 30 of the country's leading left-wing commentators and progressive opinion shapers to provide the other side of the story on today's news, media and

political agendas.

The Daily Blog Editor, Martyn Bradbury says one of the primary objectives of the blog will be to widen political debate in the lead up to the 2014 New Zealand election.

"Global trends continue to point to blogging and social media as key influencers of mainstream media reporting as well as public opinion. With so much at stake in 2014 we plan to use this online platform to fortify the collective voice of the left and progressive opinions, and enhance the quality of debate across the political spectrum," says Mr Bradbury.

The Daily Blog is supported by UNITE, the Rail and Maritime Transport Union (RMTU) and the New Zealand Dairy Workers Union (NZDWU). Members of the public are also able to make donations through the blog's supporter page.



Mr Bradbury says it is hugely encouraging to see three of the country's major Unions engage in social media and blogging in an effort to further debate around New Zealand's rapidly increasing inequality.

"New Zealand has 270 000 of its children in poverty, an unemployment rate in the double figures and the highest level of inequality recorded. There is a serious lack of critical public media services available and it's up to the blogs to fill the gap."

"I wish to pay respects to the three Unions involved in this project and I look forward to blog posts from Matt McCarten, Chris Flatt and Wayne Butson as they gauge the temperature of industrial relations through the lens of their unions," says Mr Bradbury.

TheDailyBlog.co.nz will feature: Chris Trotter, Selwyn Manning, Professor Jane Kelsey, Keith Locke, Sue Bradford, John Minto, David Slack, Morgan Godfery, Gareth Renowden, Martyn Bradbury, Coley Tangerina, Phoebe Fletcher, Dr Wayne Hope, Queen of Thorns, Burnt out Teacher, Steve Grey, Aaron Hawkins, Marama Davidson, Tim Selwyn, James Ritchie, Efeso Collins, Robert Winter, Lynn Prentice, Frank MacsKasy, Matt McCarten, Wayne Butson, Chris Flatt, Allan Alach and The Liberal Agenda.

## CANTERBURY RAIL BRANCH MEETING

The first meeting of 2013 is set down for midday on 1 March at Middleton Yard smoko room. Delegates are asked to meet at 1130.

Items to be discussed will include Toll Carriers Negotiations, Transition Heads/Bullhooks, and the roll out of the new KR Drug and Alcohol policy. Other items of business members wish to discuss should be forwarded to Branch Secretary Ian Walker at ian.walker@kiwirail.co.nz or on 021 888 902.

## NATIONAL TURNS SOLID ENERGY INTO BASKET-CASE

National's epic mismanagement has turned Solid Energy from an export award-winning company into a complete basket-case, says Labour's SOEs spokesperson Clayton Cosgrove.

"National has run Solid Energy into the ground. Four years ago it was a profitable business, now it's a train wreck. This is National's mismanagement. John Key is supposed to be a business guru but National can't run an economy and they've proved they can't run a business.

"Solid Energy appears on the verge of collapse. This must be the first time any Government has overseen such a massive failure in a state owned asset.

"Their obsession with selling off state assets forced the company into cutting jobs and investment so it could be spruced up for investors.

"This was once the jewel in the crown of SOEs, now it's a mess. This Government has a huge amount to answer for.

The big loser? Yet again, the taxpayer.

"Bill English and Tony Ryall need to step in and develop a plan to get Solid Energy back in business," says Clayton Cosgrove.

## RYALL MUST ANSWER ON BONUS PAY-OUTS

Tony Ryall should have hauled in the chairman and directors of Solid Energy and made clear that paying out \$23 million in bonuses to executives and senior management while the company was run into the ground was unacceptable, says Labour's SOEs spokesperson Clayton Cosgrove.

"Solid Energy has paid out \$23 million in bonuses over two years while the company was collapsing. That's incredible mismanagement. Tony Ryall is responsible for this company but his lack of oversight and mismanagement has seen it fall apart in two years.



**SOLID ENERGY**  
Coals of New Zealand

"It's astonishing to see executives and senior management paid millions in bonuses to run a company into the ground. The more the company is run down the more money you get. It's Lehman Brothers stuff.

"Tony Ryall is the shareholding minister of Solid Energy and under the no-surprises policy he would have known of the bonuses in 2011. He should have called in the directors and made it clear that paying bonuses while profits plunge is not acceptable to the sole shareholder – the taxpayer. But the next year bonuses continued.

"In 2009 Bill English called in the SOEs and told them he wanted more money out of them. If they can do that, the Government could have hauled in Solid Energy heads to make it clear they shouldn't be paying executive bonuses while the company was failing.

"Tony Ryall blames falling coal prices but they've been on a downward trend for four years. National should have made it clear the company needed a plan to handle coal prices but they didn't. The blame for Solid Energy's collapse lies with the Government's lack of monitoring and mismanagement.

"National's obsession with selling off state assets forced the company into cutting jobs and investment so it could be spruced up and flogged off.

"Bill English and Tony Ryall need to front up and tell the people of New Zealand what they knew, when they knew it and why they sat back and did nothing," says Clayton Cosgrove.

## **KR - HSAT SURVEY RESULTS COMING IN**

Results from the RMTU survey on the effectiveness of the KiwiRail Health and Safety Action Teams (HSATs) are starting to come in. All HSATs said they discuss safety issues and concerns of workers and work with management to resolve issues.

Most HSATs said they were involved in promoting the health and safety interests of all employees including shift workers, checking and updating the hazard registers.

Unfortunately there are barriers to accessing H&S Rep training and HSATs report low levels of participation in NZTA and the AEP audits. There is a lack of information provided on environmental monitoring, the KiwiRail safety case and feedback from industrial councils.

The survey has been sent to the Union contact person on each of the KiwiRail HSATs. The union will make contact with the remainder of HSATs to complete the survey in the coming weeks.

## **LEST WE FORGET!**

### **FOR THOSE ASKING WHY THE TRAINS DIDN'T WORK - THE STORY OF NZ RAIL FROM NZCTU'S BILL ROSENBERG**

The New Zealand Rail sale in 1993 was organised by Faye Richwhite who then proceeded to benefit from it hugely by taking a substantial shareholding - a conflict of interest fit for a post-Soviet state.

The main shareholders of the purchaser, Tranz Rail, were Faye Richwhite, Berkshire Fund and Wisconsin Central of the USA, and Alex van Heeren (Huka Lodge).

They bought a company which had been freed of debt by a \$1.6 billion injection from the government. The price was \$328 million, of which they paid only \$107 million and borrowed the rest.

According to Brian Gaynor they "were responsible for stripping out \$220.9 million of equity in 1993 and \$100 million in 1995".

By the time they had sold out, they had made total profits of \$370 million, mainly tax free because of the absence of capital gains tax, and darkened by accusations of insider trading.

Under Wisconsin's management the safety record was appalling (by 2000, fatal accidents for employees were eight times the national average) and reinvestment and maintenance were abysmal, leaving the operation in a crippled state.

They sold out to Toll of Australia who similarly failed to maintain the system, and who then sold it back to the government in two tranches for a total of over \$700 million plus on-going costs to the government of several hundred million dollars to repair the

rail network and replace the antiquated rolling stock.

It is difficult to estimate the total costs to the country, but the total cost to the government will be almost \$4 billion, greatly magnified by the neglect of the private owners.

The previous government has been accused of paying too much for the rail company, and they probably did, but that was just one element of the huge financial and opportunity losses to the people of New Zealand as a result of the privatisation that were evident well before the renationalisation.

### PORT OF TIMARU

Members held their first branch meeting of 2013 on Wednesday 20 February. The Port is ticking along and more of our members have received guaranteed hours. We have also signed up a number of new members in C3 and are looking at how we can promote their employment interests.

Members are very positive despite all they've been through in the last six months. There is plenty of interest in the wider union and members were keen to hear what was happening around the country with their fellow RMTU members.

### KIWI RAIL ADMITS LACK OF MAINTENANCE LED TO WASH-OUT

KiwiRail has admitted that its failure to maintain old and damaged culverts was behind the wash out that closed the Gisborne-Napier line, while cuts to its maintenance budget are putting the network at further risk, Labour's Transport spokesperson Phil Twyford says.

"Across the country KiwiRail missed its target of replacing 71 old culverts last year, and only replaced 49. This is cause for alarm. "The Gisborne-Napier wash-out shows what happens when essential maintenance work is not carried out.

"KiwiRail cut and deferred \$200 million of network maintenance last year. At the very time it needs to be upgrading its network and improving efficiency, the

Government's unrealistic 'Turn Around Plan' is putting enormous stress on the organisation and forcing it to cut maintenance."

"National's plan for rail is not workable. KiwiRail has missed its financial targets for two of the last three years. It is being forced to make cuts that are a false economy. At a time when the Government is wasting billions of dollars on its 'motorways of madness', it makes no sense to cripple the national rail line."

### TAKE CARE - CHECK AND CHECK AGAIN!

Following a series of Rail operational incidents over the last 12 months, a review of operations at the Taranaki site at Whareroa is being undertaken. Clearly workers don't go to work to have mishaps but through assumptions, communication issues and possible lack of experience, these incidents occurred.

The joint message of KiwiRail and the RMTU is clear! Safe operation must take priority over the timekeeping of trains. Assumption is the mother of all mishaps – we urge rail operations members to;

- Check every set of points, and;
- Check clearances, and;
- Maintain a range of vision and line of sight, and
- Maintain adequate communication between operators.

Yard collisions and derailments cause costly damage, be a hazard to our members employment but more importantly can cause one of our members to be seriously injured or even killed.

We all want everyone who comes to work to go home safe and sound at shifts end! To achieve this the message is very clear

### Take Care - check and check again!

### 'NOTHING TO SEE HERE' – YEAH RIGHT!

John Key's desperate 'nothing to see here' defence won't fool New Zealanders who

know a dodgy deal when they see one, says Labour Leader David Shearer.

"No matter how many times John Key repeats 'there's nothing to see here' he can't deny that he gave Sky City the inside running on a deal that sells our legislation in return for more pokies.

"The Prime Minister repeatedly dodged straight questions in Parliament today about whether his Chief of Staff offered Sky City 'regulatory relief' in return for building the convention centre and whether that offer was extended to other bidders.

"He didn't want to answer because it shows that he was sharing information with Sky City that other bidders were not privy to. It took the Speaker David Carter to answer for him, saying that the Prime Minister himself had offered the casino that relief.

"John Key has been spinning for days that the deputy Auditor-General's report clears him. But John Key hasn't been vindicated. He's been implicated. He's up to his eyeballs in this cosy stitch-up and is funding a convention centre on the backs of problem gamblers.

"This deal wasn't 'even-handed, it wasn't 'transparent' and it treated bidders 'very differently'. Kiwis don't support it. The Government should go back to square one and conduct an open and honest process," said David Shearer.

## **2013 NZ WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY AWARDS - ENTRIES NOW OPEN!**

Entries are now open for this year's awards, so be sure to make a time in your day to reflect upon any particularly successful initiatives you've been involved in over the last 12 months or so.

For those of you involved with smaller entities - no more than 50 staff - please note there's a category just for you.

A new individual category this year is Executive Leader, defined as a senior executive or director who is not a health & safety practitioner but whose leadership has helped transform their organisation's health & safety culture.

Entry is free and not difficult, and the closing deadline is Friday 19 April. Full information, including guidelines for preparing your entry, is available here: <http://www.safeguard.co.nz/events/awards/default.asp>

The awards gala dinner and announcement of the category winners will be held at the SKYCITY Convention Centre in Auckland on Wednesday 29 May.

So please start thinking about entering this year's awards. It is human nature to leave these things to the last minute (believe me, we know this), so remember to celebrate success and beat that closing deadline!

If you have any queries about the awards please contact our H&S Organiser Karen Fletcher on 0276006581 or [kfletcher@rmtunion.org.nz](mailto:kfletcher@rmtunion.org.nz)

## **HEKIA'S WORD IS WORTHLESS**

Hekia Parata should come clean and admit that her promise to Christchurch schools facing the axe that they would remain open until the end of 2014 was worthless, says Labour's acting Education spokesperson, Chris Hipkins.

"Last year Hekia Parata wrote to Branston Intermediate School telling it she was proposing to close it at the end of 2014. And she told a public meeting at the school that it would definitely be open in 2014.

"But now she is planning to shut the school's doors at the end of the year. And today in Parliament she did everything she could to avoid admitting that she gave any such assurance to Branston Intermediate.

"Hekia Parata can try to hide behind the words "interim decisions" and "proposal" all she likes - but the fact is she has gone back on her word. Her word is worthless.

"Is it any wonder that 71% of those polled in Canterbury want Hekia Parata sacked as Minister of Education? They don't trust her, and don't want her anywhere near the education of their children," says Chris Hipkins.

## HEADS UP – PORTS FORUM

The RMTU Ports Forum is being held in Wellington mid-year. Port Branch Secretaries are asked to formalise their representation and to advise numbers of attendees to National Office as soon as possible.

**Suggestions for agenda items are encouraged from branches.**

## 2013 CENSUS ANNOUNCEMENT

Wherever you are in New Zealand, from Scott Base in Antarctica to the far north of the country, or even on an oil rig off the Taranaki coast, on 5 March 2013, you have to be counted in the census.

Government Statistician Geoff Bascand today announced the date for the next census and says with well under two years to go, preparations are moving with a sense of urgency and excitement.

The Census of Population and Dwellings is a chance to find out a lot of information about who we are as a country, and where and how we live. The information people give is used by many groups to decide how to provide the things New Zealanders need, like hospitals, schools, and roads.

The census is a national stocktake and underpins our democracy – where people live determines the areas politicians represent.

## CTU WELCOMES NEW HEALTH AND SAFETY AGENCY

The Council of Trade Unions has welcomed the announcement today by the Minister of Labour, Simon Bridges, of a new Health and Safety Crown Agency.

Helen Kelly, CTU President, says “the union movement is committed to working with the Government to improve the health and

safety of our workforce”.

“Unions stand for decent jobs that are secure and safe”.

The CTU had supported an independent agency in its submissions to the Royal Commission on the Pike River Coal Mine Tragedy.

Helen Kelly said that during the time it takes to set up this new agency, we need to see more work done to improve the safety of workers. This agency is only part of the answer to our terrible record on death and injuries in the workforce.

New Zealand has an accident rate at work that is twice that of Australia and seven times worse than the United Kingdom. This must change and we look forward to the recommendations of the Independent Taskforce on Workplace Health and Safety which are due at the end of April.

“All workers in New Zealand, and their families and communities are counting on that report to make a difference so we can address this huge problem”.

## CTU OUT@WORK KAMP

The CTU Out@Work Council is the constitutionally recognised structure for Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Takaatapu, Fa'afine and Queer Workers of the 36 CTU affiliated unions. Out@Work works with unions to raise awareness of the issues that LGBTI issues and to end discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. We also analyse and comment on employment, social and economic issues particularly as they affect queer union members. The Out@Work Council holds a two day event every 2 years to review our activities and organise and plan ahead. This is an event with a range of speakers, panel discussions and workshops and will be held on the **3rd and 4th May**

WORKERS' MEMORIAL DAY ♦ 28TH APRIL Remember the Dead: Fight for the living

Union workplaces  
are safer workplaces!



### 2013 at Paekakariki Holiday Kamp, Paekakariki.

Membership to the Kamp is available to all CTU affiliated union members and those who identify as Queer. The theme of this year's Kamp is Empower, Energise, Act! Growing Workplace Leaders. For further information contact the RMTU National Office or the CTU's [Eileenb@nzctu.org.nz](mailto:Eileenb@nzctu.org.nz) Phone 04 802 3813

### SLIGHT FALL IN WORKPLACE INJURIES

The Health and Safety Executive in the UK has published statistics which show a slight fall in a number of key areas of UK workplace ill-health and injury. Population in 2011 62.6million people.

Between April 2011 and March 2012 workplace incidents caused:

- ❖ 22,433 major injuries such as amputations, fractures and burns
- ❖ 88,731 injuries serious enough to keep people off work for 4 or more days
- ❖ Over 1 million people reporting suffering from an illness caused or made worse by their work
- ❖ 173 workers fatally injured

### TOLL CARRIERS BEHAVING BADLY

The RMTU is attempting to negotiate on behalf of members who were employed by Toll Carriers after the takeover of Northern Southland Ltd, a South Island transport Company. Because Toll Networks used an entity called Toll Carriers Ltd to employ these staff, instead of Toll Networks limited with whom we have a collective agreement, the members do not fall under the coverage of the RMTU collective agreement.

This means they have no entitlement to redundancy compensation, shift leave,

penal rates or overtime rates. We have met with Toll management twice now and are making little progress, The most recent meeting was scheduled for 19 February and management unilaterally called this meeting off the day before.

The time may soon come when we may have to call on the wider membership to support our members in Toll. The Canterbury Rail Branch (most of the Toll Carriers members are in Christchurch) meets on 1st March and we will be giving a full report back at this meeting.

### WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY – 28 APRIL

International Workers Memorial Day is 28 April 2013. The day is about remembering those workers, especially RMTU members, who have been killed whilst at work.



All Branches are asked to commence formal arrangements for services at memorial sites.

All members are requested to attend a memorial service organised near them.

**As usual we ask all members to stop what they are doing at midday to "Honour the dead – Fight for the living" and to think about how important personal safety is to us all going home safe at the end of our days' work.**

**As usual we will be requesting KiwiRail to approve all trains stopping at midday on the 28<sup>th</sup> for 1**

**minute.**

The services (that we have been informed of to date) will be held at;

**Dunedin** – the memorial garden 1200hrs

**Hutt Shops** – 1200hrs at the workshop memorial garden.

Please advise us of all services to be held on the day?



## ITF CONDEMNS 'UTTERLY UNBELIEVABLE' MOROCCAN COURT DECISIONS

The ITF has condemned as 'utterly unbelievable' a totally unexpected decision by a court in Morocco to jail trade union leaders Said Elhairech and Mohamed Chamchati.

Elhairech the general secretary of the Moroccan Ports Union, part of the ITF-affiliated UMT, and chair of the ITF Arab World regional committee, was arrested in June 2012 on charges of 'sabotage and endangering national security'. He utterly rejected the accusations and was supported throughout by the ITF, which was unequivocal in its stance that he had been wrongly targeted following his very effective work on behalf of crews stranded by the cessation of operations of the Comarit-Comanav ferry company – which he undertook at the ITF's request. In October all charges except one minor one were dropped and his innocence proven.

Despite this he has been sentenced by the criminal Court of First Instance in Rabat, which charged him with participating in obstructing freedom of action according to article 288 of the Moroccan Criminal Code (criminalisation of trade union action). He will appeal.

Mohamed Chamchati, the general secretary of the Moroccan merchant seafarers' union, was also unjustly arrested in June 2012 on clearly mistaken charges linked to the cessation of operations of the Comarit-Comanav company. In November he and others were released without charge.

Now he too has reportedly been sentenced to two and a half years imprisonment. More details of that decision are expected soon.

ITF president Paddy Crumlin stated: "These sentences defy belief. Last year Said and Mohamed faced serious, cooked-up charges of sabotage and endangering national security. Following worldwide protests led by the ITF those ridiculous charges were rightly dropped. Now, in a shocking breach of trust and logic they have once again come under legal attack for their legitimate

trade union work in defence of workers rights."

He continued: "These men are guilty of nothing more than being effective trade unionists. We will fight these unjust and idiotic decisions all the way."

## 2013 ROGER AWARD: PEOPLE'S CHOICE

Cast your vote at <http://bit.ly/UIq28W>

The organisers of the Roger Award for the Worst Transnational Corporation Operating in Aotearoa/New Zealand are inviting you have your say by voting online for the People's Choice winner.

This is an online poll only; the field is restricted to the eight finalists for the 2012 Roger Award listed at the People's Choice Website.

The winner will be announced at the Unions Wellington May Day event.

## EDINBURGH STATION POLLUTION 7 TIMES OVER LIMIT

A study by Network Rail reports that air pollution at Waverley Station is 7 times higher than public safety limits. The report concluded that exhaust fumes from trains and taxis, coupled with toxic dust kicked up by construction works could be endangering health of commuters. The station is used by 25 million people each year.

## NEW PROCUREMENT POLICIES WILL CREATE JOBS, BENEFIT SMES

Local procurement policies like those being introduced in Australia will ensure New Zealand businesses secure a greater share of major projects, the Green Party said today.

Prime Minister Julia Gillard announced new laws on Sunday that will make all major project developers look to domestic suppliers first – a move that is worth A\$1.6 billion per year in extra work to Australian companies.

"We can implement smart new procurement policies and standards like Australia's that will ensure New Zealand businesses get a fair chance at bidding for major new



contracts," said Green Party Co-leader Dr Russel Norman.

"A preference for New Zealand firms is good for the economy and good for creating jobs.

"The current lack of a procurement plan here means major new contracts are being won by overseas companies, when New Zealand companies can do the same, if not better job, while providing wider economic benefits to the economy.

"Our manufacturing sector is in crisis, with 40,000 jobs having been lost in the last four years. Smart procurement policies, like Australia's, are needed to support the sector and vital role it plays in a resilient economy," Dr Norman said.

The Green Party has proposed new procurement policies in the ICT sector late last year and Government procurement principles in its Green Jobs package announced just before the last election.

### **NEW CABLE BLOWS GOVERNMENT ARGUMENTS AWAY**

The new undersea cable between Auckland and Sydney proves the Government's earlier claims that a second cable isn't necessary to increase competition are completely false, says Labour's communications and IT spokesperson Clare Curran

"The new cable utterly blows out of the water claims by the incumbent Southern Cross and the National Government that the one current cable is more than capable of handling future capacity and lowering prices.

"Labour believes that international broadband infrastructure and connectivity is as important as our internal infrastructure as the platform for economic transformation based on technology-related industries.

"The National Government has blocked its ears to the calls for investment in another undersea cable buying into the Southern Cross argument that it wasn't needed.

### **TAXPAYERS HIT WITH AN EXTRA \$2.4 BILLION FOR TRANSMISSION GULLY PPP**

Building Transmission Gully as a public private partnership (PPP) will triple the cost to the taxpayer - to \$3.4 billion - according to documents released under the OIA.

Labour's transport spokesperson, Phil Twyford, said the use of a PPP would cost an arm and a leg, but the potential benefits were hugely uncertain.

"The only reason the Government wants to do it is that they have blown the budget on their mega motorway projects.

"A PPP for Transmission Gully is a way of building now and paying later and Government accounting rules mean the liability won't affect its debt reduction targets. It's smoke and mirrors.

"Cabinet papers show that having Transmission Gully as a PPP will cost an extra 3 per cent of National Land Transport revenue - or \$125 million - every year for 25 years.

"This Government's appetite for motorway projects of dubious economic value is insatiable. To keep on feeding the beast it is willing to gouge the motorist and mortgage future generations."

### **LAW REFORM PIPELINE AVAILABLE ONLINE**

The "Law Reform Pipeline" lists the progress of interesting and important legislation through Parliament, as well as law reform initiatives other than Bills. The Pipeline is now available at the national [Community Law website](#). Type in "reform" to the Community Law Library, and click "[Change the Law](#)"

### **LET'S BE SAFE OUT THERE & REMEMBER.....**

## **"WE'RE STRONGER TOGETHER"!**

